Head Start

Building an Early Childhood Professional Development System

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What we know…

- Higher-quality instruction and closer teacher-child relationships result in a range of positive outcomes for children, including higher rates of early academic success, fewer behavior problems in kindergarten, and increased language and literacy skills

- Low-income children who spent more time in high-quality child care between birth and age 5 scored higher on 3rd- and 5th-grade reading and math achievement measures than their peers

- Gains in cognitive and social-emotional development are strongly linked to how early childhood professionals instruct and relate with young children

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What we know…

- The quality of child care children receive is associated with providers' educational attainment and participation in advanced training workshops

- Teachers who took part in online coursework combined with mentoring and detailed, instructionally linked feedback yielded the greatest improvements in teaching behavior and children's school readiness outcomes

- Early childhood professionals with an education specific to early childhood education and care are less likely to leave their current position

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The Who, the What, and The How of a Professional Development System

The Who: Emphasis on the learner – the ECE teacher/practitioner, the coach, provider of professional development

The What: Emphasis is on the content of the Professional Development offered

The How: Emphasis on developing a coordinated, centralized delivery of professional development

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Key Principals for a Professional Development System

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Funding

- Financial Aid and Scholarships
- Compensation/Retention Initiatives
- Quality Rating Systems (QRS)/Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS) and Tiered Reimbursement
- Paid release time
- Substitute teachers
- Salary scales
- Wage supplements

- Health insurance coverage or reimbursement
- Rewards and bonuses for obtaining degrees or credentials
- Grants to programs to increase credentials and professional development through QRIS
- Coordination of federal, state, local, and private resources and public/private partnership

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Core Knowledge

- Credentials, degree programs, and certifications recognized across sectors

- Licensing regulations, departments of education or early childhood, and other agencies requiring state standards specific to age/development and role, regardless of setting

- Teacher licensure specific to early care and education

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Qualifications, Credentials & Pathways

- Pre-service requirements
- Continuing education requirements
- Career lattice
- Credentials
- Articulation agreements
- Personnel and training registries
- Supports for advancing on the career lattice, achieving a credential or degree
- Career guide
- Professional development advising

- Continual improvement and/or individual professional development planning
- Mentoring programs/initiatives
- Compensation and rewards
- Pathway information dissemination and tracking via practitioner/workforce registry

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Access and Outreach

- Vision and Mission Statements and Guiding Principles

- Professional Code of Ethics

- Online Database of Training and Education Opportunities

- Career Development Advising

- Continuum of Individual and Group Supports

- Multiple Professional Development Delivery Methods

- Diversity of practitioners

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Quality Assurance

- Approval process
- Trainer approval
- Training approval
- Evaluation processes
- Monitoring processes
- Accreditation
- Standards are current and research-based

- Accountability system for investments
- Built in to the process

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Data and the Advisory Council

Data:

- Collection of disaggregated baseline data with periodic updates allowing for measurement of progress

- Demographic data informing needs, gaps, diversity issues, and barriers to access

Advisory Council:

- Communication and coordination policies or agreements, including common nomenclature, across departments and sectors

- Task forces focusing on professional development systems and working with the state early learning councils

- Vision and mission statements

- Guiding principles

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Where we are…

- Experience
- Orientation – DHHS licensing requirements
- Onsite – but with little oversight (projects, workshops)
- CB training
- CDA
- AA/AS
- BA/BS ECE
- BA/BS Related Field
- Varied settings center based, home based, I/T
- Regulated, unregulated but legal, unregulated not legal

- Supports for families, child care subsidy, health care (diminishing)
- T.E.A.C.H.
- REWARD$
- Career Pathways
- Federal Dollars funding local programs/projects
- Early Head Start/Head Start
- FTF dollars funding a multiple of varied programs
- Philanthropy (foundation, private donors)
- Demonstration projects
- Leadership Development

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Where we need to go...

- Infrastructure development
- An integrated system that crosses sectors serving early education professionals working in direct and non-direct service roles.
- Coordination between settings, programs, projects, etc.
- Data that promotes system building
- Articulation of community based professional development, college, and university coursework
- Professional development seminars and courses that lead to a credential or degree

- Developmental needs of teachers addressed
- Transition practices that include integrated PD of pre-k and K-1 teachers
- Indicators regarding coach/mentor qualifications
- Elements of high quality professional development
- Precertification requirements
- Funding

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Resources

National Child Care Information and Technical Assistance Center

10530 Rosehaven Street, Suite 400 Fairfax, VA 22030 Ph: 800-616-2242 Fax: 800-716-2242 TTY: 800-516-2242 Email: info@nccic.org Web site: http://nccic.acf.hhs.gov

Child Care Bureau Office of Family Assistance Administration for Children and Families

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

370 L'Enfant Promenade SW 5th Floor East Washington, DC 20447 Web site: www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ccb/

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Resources

- National Professional Development Center on Inclusion. (2008). What Do We Mean by Professional Development in the Early Childhood Field? Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, FPG Child Development Institute, Author.

- www.fpg.unc.edu/~npdci

- LeMoine, S. (2008) Workforce Designs, NAEYC Public Policy Report

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For further questions, contact…

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